

KELLY'S CRIME CORNER

October 2012 Issue 2



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SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

No police department can function effectively without the assistance of responsible citizens. We are depending on you to call and tell us whenever you observe suspicious persons or actions.

Some people fail to call the police simply because they are not aware of what seemingly innocent activities might be suspicious. Others may notice suspicious activity and are hesitant to call for fear of being seen as a "nosy neighbor". Still others take it for granted that someone else has already called.

Don't assume that someone else has already called, or that you are "bothering" the police, and don't be embarrassed if your suspicions prove unfounded! Please call the police immediately!

WHAT IS SUSPICIOUS?

Examples of suspicious behavior include:

- A stranger entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied may be a burglar
- A scream heard anywhere may mean robbery or rape
- Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices could mean stolen property
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates, or gasoline from a car should be reported
- The sound of breaking glass or other loud explosive noises could mean an accident, housebreaking or vandalism
- Persons loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood
- Someone waiting in front of a house or business becomes suspect if the owners are absent, or - if it's a business - the business is closed. This might be a lookout for a burglary in progress
- Heavy foot or vehicle traffic to and from a certain residence is not suspicious unless it occurs on a daily or very regular basis, especially during late or unusual hours. Such activity might suggest drug sales or other vice activity
- A person running, especially if they are carrying something of value, could be leaving the scene of a crime

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal. There are perfectly legitimate door-to-door salesmen, repairmen, or servicemen out there. But criminals do take advantage of this by assuming the guise of the legitimate business representatives. Here are some situations involving people you might see and what their actions might mean:

**PLEASE REPORT ALL SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO THE
POLICE DEPARTMENT!**



WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1

The Costa Mesa Police Department's Communications Department handles numerous calls for service every day. The goal of the Communications Department is to provide the citizens with the highest quality and most efficient service possible.

The dispatchers in Communications handle both police and fire calls for service. Calls are dispatched according to priority. You can reach dispatch by calling the non-emergency number **714 754-5252**, or by calling **9-1-1**. But when is it appropriate to call 9-1-1? Here are some examples when 9-1-1 should be used:

- A crime that is currently in progress or has just occurred
- Whenever life or property are in immediate danger
- A medical emergency
- A fire
- Injury traffic accidents

When you call Communications, a highly trained dispatcher will answer your call. You will likely be asked a series of questions about whatever you are reporting. It is important that you remain calm and try to answer the dispatcher's questions to the best of your ability. Please remain on the phone until the dispatcher instructs you to hang up.

When you call 9-1-1 from a cell phone, you may first connect with the California Highway Patrol, and then be transferred to Costa Mesa Police Department. We recommend you program the non-emergency number into your cell phone so you get through to the police department right away.



TAKE CRIME PREVENTION TO WORK

When you go to work, don't leave your crime prevention sense at home. Almost any crime that can happen at home or in your neighborhood can happen in the workplace. But common-sense prevention skills can help make life "at work" safer for all. Follow these tips to keep your work environment safe:

- Keep your purse, wallet, keys, or other valuable items with you at all times or locked in a drawer or closet
- Check the identity of any strangers who are in your office - ask them whom they are visiting and if you can help them find that person. If this makes you uncomfortable, inform security or management about your suspicions
- Always let someone know where you'll be - whether it's coming in late, working late, going to the photocopier or mail room, going out to lunch or a meeting

- If you bring personal items to work, such as a coffee pot, radio, or calculator, mark them with your name or initials and an identification number
- Report any broken or flickering lights, dimly lit corridors, doors that don't lock properly, or broken windows. Don't wait for someone else to do it
- Be discreet. Don't advertise your social life or vacation plans and those of your co-workers to people visiting or calling your place of work

Following these tips can help keep you safe at work!

